

There are no trumps and Z is in the lead. Y and Z want five tricks again any defence.

CHECKER ENDINGS

The neat little problem set by P.

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## SPADE BIDS TESTED AT ROYAL AUCTION

### Wide Interest Among Players in the New System of Transfers.

### TWO OPPOSING SCHOOLS Errors in Judgment Possible Still—Warnings to Partner.

The advent of the transfer system of bidding in the spade suit at auction bridge seems to be stirring up no end of discussion all over the country and the differences of opinion with regard to its merits are very striking. The majority of players are clearly in favor of it, probably because it is a decided help to most of those who play bridge. Here are two specimen letters culled from many received by THE STAR. The first is from White Plains:

"I took close on fifty years for the whist players to get down to any system in their heads which a partner could understand, but THE STAR's system of transfer tickets, good on all lines of hands, seems to solve the riddle of the bidding for the bridge player right away.

"I have played three times since your article on the spade bids appeared, and for once I got through three consecutive sittings without a row over the bidding. One good thing we noticed in the new game was the scarcity of penalties, the rubbers being smaller than usual, with the plus usually on the side of the spade bidders. There is a delightful sense of recreation in the game when the partners understand each other so easily and completely. Keep up the good work with the spade."

Here is a letter from the other side, from the Winthrop Club, in Springfield, Mass.:

"Has it occurred to you that this new auction development with the two, three, four, five, six and seven spade bids is becoming a little absurd? These elaborate systems of bidding require such an elaborate effort of memory, make the game so cut and dried, that they destroy in a large degree the greatest distinction between the natural and the merely book player—which I take it is an instinctive feeling for the probability of distribution. Unless we are prepared to have slips printed, giving the schedule of the new bids, such slips to be presented to our opponents at the beginning of each sitting, I see no way except to legislate against all spade bids except the one spade.

"Correspondence between partners should not be made easy. It should be made difficult and dangerous. Give the people with card sense what is coming to them."

Unfortunately, the "people with card sense" are not the only ones that play cards, nor are they the only ones that would like to escape the criticism of a partner. The tendency in all card games that have been popular favorites is to make them easy and attractive to the beginner. Any one who has had experience as a teacher knows that conventional rules, to take the place of the still immature judgment, are absolutely necessary for the beginner.

The Springfield correspondent's suggestion that printed slips should be placed on the table giving the schedule of the new spade bids and their meanings has already been anticipated by one of the card manufacturers, and these slips will shortly be found in every pack of cards used for playing auction bridge.

In spite of all fears for the continued supremacy of the "people with card sense," and the equalizing effects of the new bids, there will still be abundant opportunity for the application of all the intellect that can be brought to bear on the game. These informative bids are only the foundation, and all foundations are pretty much alike. There is no architecture beneath the ground. When we come to the superstructure it will probably be found that there will still be as much diversity of opinion as to the proper arrangement, and the loads that can be carried by the foundation.

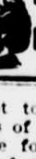
So far from the transfer system of bids reducing the game to a cut and dried affair, there will always be a number of hands that are just on the line, calling for some nice judgment on the part of the player. Accuracy of information obtained by the signal corps does not win the battle. It is the intellectual capacity of the commanding General who knows how to use that information which alone can win a victory.

In many cases an error of judgment will lead a player to send across the table a message that does not exactly fit the case, just as one of Hooker's aides brought him word that there were at least three thousand men in the lines ahead of him, but

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forgot to say that there were six batteries of artillery along with them.

The following hand is an example of one of these errors in judgment, which shows that no system of bidding can be made proof against the personal equation:

<p>♥ A Q 7 6          ♦ 10 9 7          ♣ 9 8 5 4          ♠ 6</p>	<p>Y          A B          Z</p>	<p>♥ 9 8 5 3 2          ♦ J          ♣ K Q 9 6          ♠ 10 7 2</p>
--	--	--

<p>♥ K J 10 4          ♦ A Q 4 3          ♣ A 7 5 2          ♠ 6</p>
--

Z dealt and declared no trumps and Y took him out with two royals. Heretofore the meaning of this bid has always been, "Don't take me out," and under the new system of high spade bids it still retains that meaning; but the question now is, is this the proper bid on Y's cards?

A seven-spade bid from Y would say to his partner, "You can play this hand at two royals if you like, or you can go back to no trump; My spades are good either way." With five solid tricks in a hand such as this, and knowing his partner cannot have anything, and the knowledge that his partner must have the three other suits safe, why is not a seven spade and the right one for Y's cards?

Had he made it, he would have given his partner a chance to go back to the no trump, as Z is weak in spades. But the two royal bid may be made on long and weak spades only, such as seven to the queen or jack, and Z cannot risk a return to the no trump, as Y may not have a trick in his hand if spades are not allowed to be the trumps.

As the hand was played on Y's declaration of two royals, B led the singleton club, hoping for a ruff. Z put the ace straight on and led four rounds of trumps, B discarding a heart, and Z letting go the queen or jack, and Y then led a diamond and Z ducked it, hoping A would lead a heart, but A came back with two rounds of clubs, throwing Z in again.

A heart lead was trumped by Y, who led another diamond, on which Z made his ace, but A got in on the heart and made a club trick, so that Y stopped just one short of game, but scored 72 in honors.

Had Y indicated his great strength in the spade suit and his willingness to have Z return to the no trump if he had a spade to lead, A would have led one of the black suits, probably the club, although it does not matter which he selects, as all he can make is two hearts and two clubs, Z winning the game at no trump with three by cards.

It does not always follow that the spade suit must be headed by all the winning cards in order to bid seven on the hand as Here is an instance in which the declarer was marked as weak in spades, but long in them:

<p>♥ 10 8 6          ♦ 9 7 10 4 3 2          ♣ 9 5 3          ♠ 6 4</p>	<p>Y          A B          Z</p>	<p>♥ A K 5          ♦ A 8 7 6          ♣ Q 10 8 7 5 3          ♠ 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2</p>
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<p>♥ A 9 7 5          ♦ 7 6          ♣ K Q 6 5          ♠ A K J</p>
---

Z dealt and bid no trumps. Y overcalling him with seven spades. Under the old system Y would have been forced to declare two royals or let the no trump stand, and the dealer would have left it at royals, which always meant, "Don't take me out." The hand is a grand slam either way, so the reader may think it does not matter which declaration is taken out of the game and the difference in the result. But the interesting and instructive point is the inference that is open to Z with the new bids.

Since Y has invited his partner to go back to no trumps if he does not like the royals, B thinks it is time he gave his partner a hint what to lead, so he bids two hearts. Z could have doubted this and set the contract for 400 points, but he preferred to take the game and rubber, which looked like a certainty.

Z is quite willing to have the hand played at royals, in which he has three honors, but his partner would never bid seven spades unless he was willing to be taken out of the royals by a return to the no trump. B having declared two hearts, the only cards Y can possibly hold to justify his seven spade bid must be tops in diamonds and clubs, as he has none in the spade suit. If he has the tops in diamonds and clubs to justify giving Z a chance

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go back to no trumps, it is a game hand either way, so Z bids two no trumps, although he has only one stopper in hearts, and it makes a grand slam on the hand.

Leading a heart.

Here is a hand sent to THE SUN from Portland, in which the dealer's partner undoubtedly too anxious to play with the new toy; another instance of the old adage about the difficulty of finding any set of rules that will eliminate the personal equation:

♥ A K 5 6 4

♠ 8 5

♦ A 9 4 3

♣ 9 7

Y

A B

Z

♥ 8 3

♠ Q J 10 4

♦ Q 10 8 7 5

♣ Q J 10

Z dealt and bid no trumps and Y took it out with six spades. This shows a willingness to have the hand played at earse or no trumps, but not at royals, here is where we get to the Judgment, knowing that these transfer bids do not make the bidding an entirely mechanical proceeding.

Y's hand does not justify an invitation to return to no trumps, because outside he heart suit, which is not even solid, there is only one sure trick, the ace of diamonds. The proper declaration was two hearts, saying to the partner, "Don't take me out."

The bid entirely misled Z, who figured that his partner must have the club suit and possibly the ace of diamonds, as he asks not to be taken out in royals, which

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shows weakness in spades. If Y has  
 one or six hearts and a sure trick or two  
 in clubs it is a game hand, and might  
 not be a grand slam at no trumps, so  
 Z goes back to that declaration, bidding  
 one no trumps.

A led the king of clubs and B played  
 the Queen. Foster, who with the Jack, his second  
 bid, shows one higher, the queen,  
 no more. If it is no more, the ten  
 would suit, so A leads small for the  
 second round, so makes six clubs, not  
 only saving the game but setting the  
 contract before Z can get into the lead.

If Y bids two hearts, and is left with  
 one or if A overcalls with three clubs and  
 supports Y in hearts, B will probably  
 bid the queen of clubs in either case.  
 If he cannot trounce anything, and that  
 the only trick he makes, no matter  
 what he leads next, as Y can exhaust the  
 clubs and ruff two spades, while Z  
 has a clear and all the diamonds are  
 good for tricks any time.

It is not to be expected that every one  
 will adhere strictly to the new system in  
 opening bids, because there is an ele-  
 ment in human nature that will always  
 be tempted to take a chance on some  
 particular hand just to see how the thing  
 will turn out. We all know the limit  
 on which it is wise to bid no trumps.  
 Every day we see dealers make that  
 declaration upon hands that are not up  
 to standard by a trick or two, or with two  
 losing suits.

There is a curious instance of a dealer's  
 showing a shot on a five spade bid when  
 he should have known better:

♥ 9 8 6 5  
 ♦ 8 7 3 2  
 ♣ 7 5 4  
 ♠ 8

♥ K Q 2  
 ♦ K 9 6  
 ♣ A 9 3 2  
 ♠ 10 3 2

Y  
 A B  
 Z

♥ 10 4  
 ♦ K Q J 5  
 ♣ K 10 7  
 ♠ J 9 5 4

♥ A J 7 3  
 ♦ 10 4  
 ♣ 8 6  
 ♠ A K Q 9 6

The correct declaration on Z's cards  
 is one royal, but being anxious to try the  
 new system and having no opportunity  
 to see so far that evening, he thought he  
 would see what his partner would do with  
 it if he made the declaration on a near-  
 bid five spades, showing a wish for Y to  
 bid a heart or royal, whichever he  
 liked, but not to go no trumps. Of course  
 he picked out the hearts, as he had only  
 one spade.

B led the ace of clubs and upon seeing  
 A's dummy and finding he had every suit  
 trumped, even the spades, he led the  
 diamond. Z put on the ace and led three  
 rounds of spades. Y taking two club dis-  
 cards, then he led the eight of dia-  
 monds, which A covered with the nine. Y  
 trumping the jack and B the king. Another  
 trump lead from B and A made both king  
 and queen, coming back with two rounds  
 of clubs after that.

This allowed Y to ruff and Z to get rid  
 of a diamond so that he could trump the  
 next diamond, but that was the last trick  
 he had, the contract falling by two  
 tricks.

If Z had bid one royal originally he  
 would have led the king of hearts. This Z would  
 have won, leading three rounds of trumps  
 and then a diamond, the nine, jack and  
 king falling. The return of the heart  
 would be covered with the jack and  
 queen, making the nine and eight good in  
 the suit.

A's only chance now is the club, in  
 which he makes two tricks. B getting im-  
 mense the high trump and A the diamond  
 one, but Z still gets his contract with the

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